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Christs in Miniature

BY NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. Galatians 2:20.

STANDING solitary and alone, like some impregnable Everest, Jesus Christ looms over the landscape of human life and history. Stout Cortez of Keats' poem gazed in no more solemn rapture from a peak in Darien than the world looks upon the colossal figure of the Nazarene. He is the sensation of the ages. Before the moral grandeur of this personality humanity humbles itself in awe, and well it should. In so doing, however, there is danger of committing a positive error, for we have frequently permitted him to languish among the sublimities. He has been rendered all but impotent by the praise of the generations. We have gazed at the far summit of that life and, with Wells, have sadly declared, "The Galilean is too great for our small hearts." We have said with pathos in our voices and feeling in our hearts, "It is impossible for any man to approximate the Christ-like life."

Is this the gospel? I think not. The gospel does hold this life in shining glory before us. It does declare that in the face of Jesus Christ we see the glory of God. Nor does it lower for our easy compliance the Christ ideal. But the gospel also says that this glory came and dwelt among us and walked these dusty ways, not that we should forever gaze in mingled awe and admiration at an unattainable ideal but that in him we should see what we ought to be—aye, that in him we might see what we *can* be.

I therefore raise for your consideration this morning this thesis—that Jesus Christ, the sublimest character who ever lived, may be re-created in you and me and walk this earth in us. When Lincoln died, Tolstoy, looking across from Russia, said, "He was a Christ in miniature." That is what we are to become—Christs in miniature.

Does the phrase startle you? I am afraid that it does, for we seem to dwell under a perfect obsession that the

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life in Christ Jesus, our Lord, is forever an unattainable ideal and that we can never reach it, even approximate it. If that is your conception today, I say that you are totally out of agreement with the early disciples who knew him far better than we know him and who, therefore, may be considered wiser guides than any of us, for when you open the pages of the New Testament and get into that electric atmosphere, you find yourself in the presence of audacious men and women. You read of them saying this, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." And that did not satisfy them, for they said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." And even that did not satisfy them, for they said, "When he shall appear, we shall be like him." At another time we hear them saying this—"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become." To become sons of God.

On another occasion we hear St. Paul say, "I live" and then he stopped, for he knew he had made a mistake. He said, "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And on yet another occasion Jesus himself, speaking to his disciples, a group composed of apparently very ordinary men out of the common walks of life—one of them a fisherman, another a tax-gatherer, and so on—said to them this apparently unbelievable thing, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

HAS IT BEEN DONE?

Thus we find within the confines of the Scriptures abundant support of my thesis, that we should become, through him, Christs in miniature. But we may well ask the question, and a scientific age would ask it, "Has it ever been done? Has anybody in the long course of human history become a Christ in miniature?" I hold that when the Beau Brummell of Assisi, Francis, knelt by a wayside altar and gave his heart to Christ and went singing out on the highways of Italy, in the twelfth century, Jesus Christ, reincarnated in flesh and blood, walked in the person of Francis among men.

Gladstone, after reading the life of John Bunyan and being profoundly stirred by it, said, "No tinker hath such powers as this. It is my belief that in Bunyan God spoke." George Whitfield said of Isaac Watts, "He was a bit of Christ."

Last summer in England I came upon an entrancing story. The saintly Wesley one day was preaching in a downtrodden section of London, a place where raucous and ribald pleasures held sway, a sort of deteriorated Coney Island, if you please. Wesley was addressing a vast multitude of people when, over at the edge of the crowd, two ruffians appeared. They said to one another, "Who is this preacher? We'll show him. What right has he to come here, spoiling our fun?" They reached down and took a stone in each hand and belligerently elbowed their way through the crowd until they came within hailing distance of the preacher. Then they threw back their arms with the stones, ready to hurl into his face, when as Wesley was talking about the power of Christ to change the lives of sinful men a beauty spread over his face, that great old light never seen on land or sea, and transformed him with its effulgence. They stood transfixed, their arms poised in air. One turned to the other with a note of awe in his voice and said, "He ain't a man, Bill. He ain't a man." The stones rolled from their hands onto the ground, and as Wesley spoke, their hearts were softened. Finally when the sermon had been completed, the great preacher made his way through the crowd, which parted respectfully to permit him to pass. One of these ruffians very timidly reached out his hand to touch the hem of the preacher's garment and as he did so, the attention of Wesley was drawn to him and his companion. He reached out his two hands and placed them on the heads of these two ruffians and said, "God bless you, my boys" and passed on and as he did so, one ruffian turned to the other and said, with even more awe in his voice, "He is a man,

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Bill. He is a man. He's a man like God." Ah, again and again in human life this old world has been sweetened and ennobled by men and women who have reached up and caught something of the flower and the glory and the beauty of the life of Jesus Christ and put it into their own personalities.

Now I believe that today I am talking on the most important topic upon which any one can address a company of people, for what is the great need of the world in this hour? Legislation? Only partially. New ideas? Only partially. What the world needs more than anything else in this hour is a great number of Christlike lives. That is the only thing that will save us. We are now engaged in the very great process of trying to build a new kind of society—an unselfish, cooperative, altruistic society. I ask in all earnestness how can we build that kind of society without unselfish, cooperative, altruistic men and women? We can not have an ideal society with unideal people. We can raise the finest structure imaginable, but unless we root it and ground it upon men of character and idealism, at the first storm

the whole structure will collapse like the house of the man who built upon the sands.

What is a Christ in miniature? Here we come down to some very simple things, but that is good for us, for I believe that one of our supreme needs is to get back to the great simplicities of the Christian faith. In those days they said that the whole world was gone after him. Why? Because he had a very profound philosophy? No. Because he was a great scientist? No. Because he was a great theologian? No. Because he was a great liturgist? No. The whole world was gone after him because he lived a certain kind of beautiful and fascinating life. If we can get back into our lives some of these great simplicities of Jesus Christ, we will shake this old city and this old world for him.

One of these things is the very simple thing of love—tender, human love—in our hearts. Now Christian love is not a genial glow or an affable, sticky sentiment. Christian love is the belief in, and the practicing of brotherhood; not the theory of brotherhood, but the fact of brotherhood. I think that one of the great needs of this hour is for us to get a love for humanity in our hearts like Jesus had it, which will break down all barriers of caste, of color, of nationality and of creed.

WHEN BARRIERS BREAK

This story is told of the late Eugene V. Debs. Regardless of what you may think of his political philosophy, if we could have his spirit, some of us, we would be better men and women. When he was in prison, they told him that an old negro murderer was on his deathbed and they said, "It is very pathetic because the old negro, who has been very hard and wicked in character, is calling for his mother." Strange, isn't it, that when we get into the dark shadows, whether it is Anatole France, the darling of the French Academy, or an old negro murderer in the penitentiary, we say, "Where is mother?" The old negro was calling for his mother. Debs went into his hospital cell; put his hand on the face of the old negro; and he looked up with a wonderful smile on his face at Debs; and in his delirium he said, "Ah, Mammy, I knew you'd come." Then Debs, out of the great love of his heart, reached down and took the great form of the negro in his arms; put his arms clear about him; hugged him to his breast, the tears raining down from his eyes upon the face of the old black prisoner who had murdered a man. Then Debs began to swing him gently to and fro, singing that old song of the plantations, "Swing low, sweet chariot; comin' for to carry me home." Finally the angels came down and took the spirit of the black man back to the God who gave it. They say that a holy hush settled in that cell, that those there were neither black nor white, socialists, capitalists, rich or poor. They were brothers—heart to heart, mind to mind, soul to soul. Now, as I say, that is a very simple thing, but this world of ours is torn between classifications of people. The only thing that will bring us together is the love of Jesus Christ in human hearts, which breaks down every barrier and every division.

Then again I believe that we need to get back into our hearts these days and into our Christian practice, the art of renunciation. We Christians are too soft. The element of sacrifice is largely gone out of our lives except as a theory. Renunciation—that's a hard old word. It was central in the Christian tradition, but it has become dim in later years. Like a great many other things in the Christian faith, it remains only as a symbol. Take the cross. The cross today adorns our churches. It is beautifully wrought or it is made of chaste gold and silver to hang midst perfume about milady's neck. That isn't the cross. The cross is two great, rough pieces of wood, splintery and hard and heavy, upon which the body of a man broke itself in the long ago. Renunciation remains with us as a symbol like that.

CLEANSED BY REDEMPTIVE LOVE

Finally a Christ in miniature is one whose sins have been cleansed by redemptive love. What is it that changes and cleanses a man more completely than redemptive love? Nothing, I think. When a young man commits some sort of sin or lives an unworthy life, what does he do to his mother, for example? By his sin, by his unworthiness, he literally nails his mother to a cross of anguish. Every evil thing he does, every unworthy act he commits, is another nail in her hands or in her feet. She is nailed upon the cross of his sin. And many, many times through the years a young man or a young woman or an older man or an older woman, looking upon his mother hanging there on the cross of his sin, has felt the power of redemptive love in his own heart.

Dr. E. Stanley Jones tells this incident concerning a young couple in India. He was in the government service. They had only recently married. She was a beautiful, a pure, and a lovely young woman, high in her idealism. They lived together in exquisite happiness for a while and then it seemed necessary for him, in order to advance in his profession, to go to England. While in England for the first time in his life he strayed into immorality. When he came back to India, he thought he would give it up, that we would live again a virtuous life, but it was too attractive to him and he continued in immorality. Night after night when he would go home, the pure love of his wife would stab him like a dagger in the heart. She was so trusting. She believed in him. She had confidence in him. Then that awful struggle began in his mind. Finally, he said to himself, "I can stand it no longer. I must tell her." Then he thought, "Ah, she will blast me; she will leave me; and I love her. I cannot live without her, but," he said, "I can stand this agony no longer."

He took her into a room and began to unfold to her the whole miserable story and as she caught the first implication of what he meant, she fell back against the wall and put her hand over her heart and her face became ashen. As she listened, her head dropped on her breast. Only once did she cry out and that was to say, "Oh, oh don't hurt me; don't hurt me like that. I can't stand it. Don't hurt me." He saw his wife there with her arms outstretched against the wall. He said, "Strangely enough, I saw back of her another form on a cross and that figure and the figure of my wife seemed to be strangely blended together. As I watched her there, suffering upon the cross of my sins for me and as I heard her say to me, 'I love you; I'll forgive you; we'll build

up life together;' " he said, "Suddenly I heard another voice, infinitely more beautiful than her own, saying to me, 'I love you; I'll never leave you.' Then," he said, "strangely I felt something unutterably sweet and beautiful coming into my heart and all the old ugly things were taken away." He has been a different man to this very day. Won't you let him today in your own heart exert the power, the transforming influence, of redemptive love? Under the marvellous alchemy of his touch we can become in these troubled days Christs in miniature.

(EDITOR'S NOTE—This sermon is one of a series by Dr. Peale which will shortly appear in book form. All publication rights reserved by the author, inclusive of the title of this sermon which is the title of the forthcoming book.)

The Verdict of Time

BY M. J. HOFFMAN

For David, after he had in his own generation served the purpose of God, fell on sleep. Acts 13:36.

THIS is a verdict of time. These words were spoken by one who lived in the first century of our era concerning someone who lived nearly a thousand years before Jesus was born. Time tests everything. It places men and movements as nothing else can. Contemporary verdict, often swayed by prejudice, is rarely reliable. Time alone can reduce exaggerated contemporary emphases, allay violent partisan prejudices, and offer a true prespective. It is as if Paul in this connection were saying, "Whatever you may say for or against David, and a lot can be said against him, this one fact has stood the test of time, that in his day and generation he served the purpose of God."

The theme directs our thinking along two lines; What was God's purpose for David's day, and how did he serve it? What is God's purpose for our day, and how may we serve it?

It is not entirely presumptuous to recognize peculiar purposes of God in the various stages of history, for it is through successive purposes realized that God works his one increasing purpose out. If a test must be applied to the determining of a divine purpose for any given period of time, it will likely be found in the outstanding need of a particular age or people, perchance in a major issue or cause whose success or failure effects for weal or woe millions of men. God's purposes vary, now a crisis in religion, as attested more than once in the early centuries of our era and in the Reformation; then a struggle for national independence or a contest for human liberty; it may be a crisis in terms of some national or world besetting evil like war; or again in the field of a more equitable distribution of the wealth which not isolated individuals but a social order produces. In other words, our reaction to these major issues or crises determines the verdict which time will pass on us, as it has on men all down the ages.

It requires no argument to prove that the mission of the Jews was not primarily in the field of art, music, philosophy, jurisprudence, science or military affairs, but rather in a field which was essentially religious. To this the entire Old Testament bears testimony, emphasizing as it does that the essential purpose of God for the Jews was that they should keep alive in a world cursed with idolatrous polytheism a high and noble monotheistic conception of God, a being supernatural, yet immediately concerned with his world, a God of righteousness and justice, insisting on high ethical values and demanding obedience to divine codes of moral conduct. This ethical God has an ethical purpose for human life. He has written it in the very laws of our bodies, our minds and of our social organizations. He makes it the law of the nations. None is so great that he is superior to it; none so small he must not obey.

The story of the life of David constitutes irrefutable proof that he so conceived of God's purpose, and so acted upon it. His call to leadership, the manner of his anointing, his attitude toward Saul, reveal a nature deeply touched by the immediacy of God. One of his first official acts after taking Jerusalem from the Jebusites was to bring the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of the presence of God, to the city which was to become the nation's capital. This was not popular gesture, but rather the expression of a conviction that unless God has a central place in any government that nation cannot endure. By composing some of the most appealing religious lyrics ever penned he lifted worship above bare formalism to heights of beauty and power. The psalms of David served not only to make religious worship effective, but to make it popular as well. It is, however, a comparatively easy matter to make religion popular, but a vastly different thing to make it permanent. The camel's hair tent that sheltered the Ark of the Covenant suggested to David the passing and the transitory. The thought of his own many-pillared marble palace, suggesting beauty and permanence, made him very uncomfortable whenever from his palace window his eye fell on that simple tent. This glaring contrast produced in him an overmastering desire to build a temple worthy of the faith he cherished, and which would assure its permanency among his people. Such a life, in spite of failures and inconsistencies, could not help but receive a favorable verdict of time.

OUR OWN DAY

Now this is interesting, but important only as it leads us to inquire as to the nature of the purpose of God for our day, and how we may serve it. Ask a dozen serious people what God's purpose for our day is, and you will quite likely get twelve different answers. And they may all be true! This confused age of ours presents many major issues in which God must be more interested than we are. War or peace, cooperation or competition, broken homes and blasted hopes, poverty in the midst of plenty, crime in high places and in low, communism, fascism, democracy—indeed, politically, socially, economically and religiously, the world is freighted with issues. However, if I were asked to name *the* major characteristic of our day, responsible for most of our ills, I would answer that it is the sense of insecurity.

Technologically and scientifically we have reached a stage of advancement that makes any previous age resemble the dark ages. Yet never in the history of the world has the sense of insecurity been stronger or more paralyzing. Fear of losing one's job, or fear of not finding one, fear for the safety of one's investments, fear of a dependent old age, of sickness, want and privation, fear of death—how universal they are. Insecurity makes the business man hesitant, and the possible purchaser timid. Insecurity prompts the building of larger navies and the recruiting of larger armies. Insecurity leads to rivalry between nations, armament races, tariff walls

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and trade restrictions. Insecurity is producing a world filled with shell shocked nations.

Now if religion has any specific contribution to make to this age it cannot ignore this challenge. For it seems to me that the establishment of security by venturing boldly for God and humanity is the primary purpose of God for our day. God's purpose, so conceived, can be realized only as we recognize its individual and social implications.

INDIVIDUAL IMPLICATIONS

Almost any system will work if good men are in control. The best system will fail if men who have no social vision or sense of social responsibility are in command. There is a good deal of cheap denunciation of the individual emphasis prominent in the preaching of a former generation, and still prevalent in many circles today. Many of our modern preachers fall into a far worse error, for they lose themselves in glittering generalities, aiming at everything and hitting nothing. If the individual note in the gospel message is lost, we lose what is indispensable. There is no such thing as social regeneration apart from individual regeneration. That was Jesus' way—always the individual. He must have recognized the evils of the Roman system of tax gathering, how inherently corrupt it was. He never openly attacked the system, but he did go after Zacchaeus. That dinner in the latter's home was not just a social function. Jesus did not talk only, if at all, about the terrible evils of a system, but he went right after Zacchaeus, did not spare him, stripped his soul naked, and the result we all know.

So in our day. The betrayal of trust, the shaking of confidence, the losses of millions of innocent investors, business failures and bank failures, all of which were so immediately responsible for the prevalent feeling of insecurity, were not due wholly to the fact that the systems were wrong, but rather because men charged with responsibility either were not Christian, or failed to live their faith. Obviously men must be changed as Zacchaeus was changed. Our age requires an emphasis upon individual regeneration so that we may have men whom money cannot buy nor politics corrupt, men who will do an honest day's work for an honest day's pay, men of social vision, honest, lovers of God and their fellowmen. We must be born again to become like that.

MINISTRY TO THE INSECURE

This individual emphasis must have regard for the victims of insecurity. What are we to say to the thousands of utterly disillusioned people who through no fault of their own are left stranded? What message have we for the honest man who has vainly tried to find work, and seeing his family suffer concludes that there is no justice in the world, and that religion means nothing? Thank God, Christian people, ministers and laymen alike, can still be priests mediating the comfort, strength and courage of God. Sympathy and understanding expressed in a sincere effort to help not only in relieving distress of body, but of the mind and soul as well, are of tremendous value. Devoted friendship was never more needed than now. Thousands of ministers are discovering that their most effective service lies not in the pulpit but in pastoral visitation, comforting, inspiring, and in the name of God mediating forgiveness, courage and hope. These are intangibles, but the intangibles are the most real. It is still true,

> We kneel, how weak,
> We rise, how full of power.

We need not be trained psychologists or psychiatrists knowing all about divided personalities, inhibitions, conditioned reflexes and so forth. Jesus knew nothing about that. But his faith and courage were so infectious that those who came under the radiant spell of his personality found themselves changed. "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ." What he did perfectly we must do no matter how imperfect our efforts. It was not for naught that Jesus said, "Greater works than these shall ye do."

Insecurity is far more frequently the result of what a system does to men than of what men do individually to one another. In the words of Dr. Niebuhr, it is a case of moral man and immoral society. Systems whose aims are anti-Christian and anti-social are the curse of our

day. Therefore in seeking to achieve God's purpose we face not men individually but strongly entrenched systems. Such systems must be bodily rooted out or radically changed if humanity is to have its new birth of freedom. The recent damning disclosure made by Fortune magazine of the ghastly conspiracy of international munitions manufacturers against the peace of the world shows how futile pious resolutions protesting the evil of war really are. These manufacturers are racketeers fattening on human blood, and, like all racketeering, their system has not one redeeming feature.

CAPITALISM AND INSECURITY

Without a question of doubt our modern capitalistic system is a major cause of the almost universal feeling of insecurity. A system whose driving urge is profit, whose method ruthless competition, a system which produces poverty in the midst of plenty; which all too frequently ranges employer against employees as enemies rather than as cooperators in a common enterprise; a system which causes an unholy scramble for world markets, leaving international hatred and distrust as inevitable legacies; such a system cannot go on unchanged into what we hope will be a better day, for there can be no general security until this system is radically changed.

At this point the Christian church is at the cross roads. We must awake to the fact that we have no gospel at all if it loses its social content. Russia serves as a warning. Hundreds of preachers wax exceedingly vehement in their denunciation of that country. They seem utterly oblivious of the fact that the established church in Russia had neither message nor a mighty social program designed to redeem that unhappy land from its poverty and destitution. Priest and tsar had bled the country white, and so both had to go to make a new day possible. We had better take warning. Unless the church in our land is awake to its challenge and opportunity those great socially redemptive forces now under way will completely ignore the church because it has neither message nor power.

THE ALTERNATIVE TO COMMUNISM

The most searching criticism of the Laymen's Report, "Rethinking Missions," was made by Dr. E. Stanley Jones, and that in an area rising high above theological subtleties. He affirms that, "many of the attitudes of the report on social reconstruction seem outmoded and out-of-date." He charges the authors of the report with failure to rise above the framework of capitalism in which they found themselves, and adds, "They failed to give the missionary movement help at the place where it needed it most, namely, What attitude should we take toward social reconstruction? Mind you, not social service within the framework of the present system, but a shifting of the whole of society to a new and more just basis. We are face to face with that question in both east and west. We have got to provide an alternative to Marxian communism or succumb to it. And the only way to beat them is to beat them to it. The laymen gave us little or no light here. At this place when we accept what the laymen say we must go beyond it."

Now I hear someone say, "Dr. Jones may be right, but he gives me no hint as to what I can do in the matter. I try to live my life as I believe Christ would have me live it, but it all seems so futile." At times we all feel like that. Seventeen years ago things were different. Most of us made real sacrifices, doing our bit to prosecute what we believed was a war to end war. There was no sense of futility then, for we were on the offensive, personally convinced of a share in a great enterprise. The trouble today is not primarily lack of method, but rather a lack of wholehearted commitment to God's purpose. Granted the latter, and methods will largely take care of themselves. Consider only one illustration out of many. Do you think that the iniquitous Vinson bill and the almost equally vicious Independent Offices bill would ever have been passed if all of us who from conviction opposed these measures had let those who represent us in Washington know how we felt about it? No, we did not deem it worthwhile to spend ten minutes of our time and a three cent stamp to record our views where they would have been effective. The munition manufacturers and the American Legion lobbies knew better. They were on the job. It is useless to pray God to work his purpose out, and leave it at that. God is going to wave no magic wand, for his purpose can be accomplished only when his children actively set about doing his will. Only so can the sense of insecurity rising from an unjust social and economic order be relieved. Only so can that order itself be reformed.

BENEVOLENT INTELLIGENCE

There is no reason in the world why this land so lavishly blessed with resources of every kind should not have unemployment insurance, old age pensions, medical service available for all, slums cleared, decent housing for every family; in other words a sense of security for all who deserve it. Benevolent intelligence touched by the spirit of Christ, more concerned with men than with profits can, even within a capitalistic framework, achieve a happy social order such as no age has known. We shall, however, not achieve this purpose just by wishing.

Finally, we cannot hope to serve God's purpose, no matter how nobly conceived, effectively if we encourage within ourselves a spirit of pessimism, or infect others with it. Despite all that points to the contrary this is the best age the world has known. There is vastly more good than evil, courage than cowardice, virtue than vice. Even our capitalistic form of economic life, while tremendously in need of radical change and repair, is not an unmixed evil. Under it we have made substantial progress, and achieved a comparatively high standard of living. The church is not as powerless as many would have us think. Our educational forces, temporarily crippled, are doing valiant service. Everywhere in industry and outside of it is rising a finer sense of social responsibility. The battle is not yet won, but is a long way from being lost. However weak our own faith, God still has faith in us. However skeptical we are of seeing God's purpose realized, there is not one scintilla of evidence that he has abandoned faith in his own enterprise. Our concern is not to debate about the possibility of God's purpose being realized. Ours is the task of serving that purpose with wholehearted devotion. Only so can we hope for a favorable verdict of time.

What it Means to Follow Jesus Christ

By Daniel A. Poling

I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. St. Luke 9:57.

"I WILL follow thee whithersoever thou goest," said a young lawyer to Jesus. The man stands for a moment in the white light of history. His words ring like a trumpet over the centuries. But he disappears as quickly as he came. He was an incident opened and closed in an instant. What was his background? And did he follow to the end? These are among the questions that we may fairly ask, but for them there is no answer. The lawyer comes unheralded and, save for this brief record, goes unwritten.

But there is another and more important question: What does it mean to follow Jesus?

The answer given by the Master on the occasion to which we have referred made clear the fact that to follow him then meant physical hardships and social sacrifices. It meant more. It became a restatement of the great challenge, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." To follow Jesus meant choice. It has never meant less than that. It means just that now. His great plan provides for only voluntary enlistments, never for conscription. He will have in his company only those who "choose to run"!

This principle applies not only to individuals but to the church herself. To follow Jesus means to follow in his spirit. He said, "Come and see. Look this whole matter over. Sit at my feet. Learn of me. Justify your decision, then make it." Measured by experiences and personal discovery, it was a century after Peter's first meeting with Jesus before the Master challenged him to make the great confession, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." The Galilean's life was a continuous demonstration of Isaiah's text, "Come let us reason together."

DELIBERATE TRUTH

Christ's supreme demonstration of courage was in his attitude toward truth. We build barricades about the cause we hold dearer than life. He released his cause; He threw it out to friends and foes alike. He knew that it would win at last and that always it is its own final defense. The fact that in the long march to triumph he would suffer and die made no difference. A man must be very sure of his cause to wait on the vindication of time. Error always hastens to a conclusion. Generally we are in a fever to vindicate our interpretation of truth. We forget that "the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life."

It is not easy to follow Jesus Christ. It is easy to recite a creed. It is hard—very, very hard—to be Christian. What a man believes, what a church believes, makes all the difference between slavery and freedom, paganism and Christianity; but what I believe is more than a lip recital. It is a life revival.

To follow Jesus Christ means to follow him in our attitudes toward individuals and toward problems that confront individuals in their personal lives and in their social relationships. The common people heard him gladly because he spoke a language they could understand; because his ministry to their bodies and souls fed their hunger, answered their questions, healed their diseases and forgave their sins. Such as these send us to our smelling salts; and their presence in our Christian pews would be regarded as an alien invasion.

But we are talking about following Jesus Christ. He did not ignore the rich and the intellectually privileged. He gave particular attention to one young ruler. And as for Nicodemus, the scholar, he spent a night with this member of the Sanhedrin, a night from which comes the echo of the sweetest story ever told—"For God so loved the world that he gave . . ."

Certainly the church to follow Jesus Christ must have a message to high and low, a message and ministry to each and all. Selective evangelism is a pagan practice. Christ does not smile upon it and Christianity languishes over it.

The Galilean's attitude toward little children has marked him forever as the master baby lover of the world. The exploitation of childhood, whether in a state carpet factory of Algeria, an American-owned mill in China, or on the oyster beds and in the sweat shops of the United States, is a sin against the Holy Spirit.

WHERE RIGHTS ARE AT STAKE

The church in politics is the church following Jesus Christ where human rights are at stake. Those who cry, "Preach the old gospel!" and "Back to your pulpits and prayer meetings!" are generally those who never saw a prayer meeting and to whom the old gospel means exactly what it meant to the Pharisee who went into a fit of anger when Jesus healed a blind man on the Sabbath.

To follow Jesus Christ means to go with him down all the paths of life, into all the relationships of life, for this Christianity is the all of life. The church once closed the saloon because the saloon was an enemy of man's body and soul. She will continue to fight the liquor traffic because it has been convicted fairly of the most heinous of all crimes, the crime against human personality. Another has said, "You can repeal the 18th Amendment, but you can not repeal the liquor problem."

What has been called "the Christianizing of the social order" is but the recognition of Christ's sovereignty over the area of a man's life in which he earns his bread and rears his family.

To follow him at all means to follow him as Prince of Peace. It was a military man who once said that if the world ever went to war again, the church would be to blame. He may have said too much, but certainly his words are a compliment as well as a possible indictment. Christianity and war are natural, are final enemies. The preacher who declares "the whole truth" here may win a place on a blacklist. Timid souls in his consistory may cry out as in moral pain, but he will please the one who said, "Put by thy sword."

To enter the World Court, to promote disarmament under international agreements, these are but to endorse our own integrity, to fulfil a covenant of personal and national honor, to *be* the Christianity that we recite in our creeds.

From any social task dare we turn away if we would follow him? This civilization must be reorganized or it will surely disappear; and it will not be worth preserving if in its new form it does not follow Jesus Christ. Christians of the name can not be pagan in practice and still follow him. Our written and published resolutions are too generally mocked by our civic delinquencies.

To follow Jesus Christ means to follow him in recognition of the fact that before there can be a new world there must be new world-builders. Surely men and women must be born again before they can vitalize their generations with new life. New thinkers and then new things in the gospel order, though the two are one and the time element is not the vital factor. The supreme business of the church is the business that took Paul into Macedonia and William Carey into India. Evangelism —congregational, pulpit, and personal evangelism, mass and individual evangelism—evangelism by whatever name and program you may know it, should be, and I believe is, the paramount issue before our congregations, our classes and our synods. Paul's dream of a spiritual empire was born in a passion to release a personal experience. And we shall win our worlds as he won his if we surrender our lives as he surrendered his.

THE RIGHTS OF PERSONALITY

To follow Jesus Christ means to follow him in our attitude toward personal rights. With us rights represent prerogatives and property. They give us comfort and safety—a little more elbow room. With Jesus rights were recognized only to be surrendered. We fight for ours. He took his to the cross. Here lies the way out for a hating, arming world. And here is the open door to the spiritual conquest of human society. When those outside the church can see in churchmen the quality of personal and organizational unselfishness which the pagan Roman saw in the early Christians, history will be repeated. To win we have only to believe—but to believe "hard enough."

To follow Jesus Christ means to accept his test for discipleship and his test is not any creed that Christians now recite. I believe in the creed of my church. To repeat its sentences is to identify myself with the labors and martyrdoms of just men made perfect and to me it is more—it is infinitely more. But even then the creed is not the test.

Nor is it the sacraments. I believe in the sacraments. They have for me a veritable weight of glory when I kneel at Christ's table of remembrance. But the test is not the sacraments. What is the test?

The test of Jesus Christ for discipleship, the test of Jesus Christ for those who would follow him, is not in any one of a hundred worthy—ah, and holy matters that we acknowledge. It is not in any one of a thousand rich traditions that we reverence. Traditions have their place; but with him we are not known as children of the "Half-Moon" or heirs of the Reformation. Christ's test is, in its naked simplicity, "By this (not by these!) shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another."

What does that mean? For me it means organic union at last, organic union between the Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Church in America; organic union everywhere within Christendom. Eagerly I look and strive toward it. Perhaps world evangelism waits upon its consummation.

Have we not expended vast treasures and thrown in the lives of our well-favored sons and daughters? Has not Christ himself been constant? Certainly he has not failed. But we have sent out missionaries as Methodists, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians and what not! We have duplicated activities, we have competed with men and with money and beyond all our success we have failed.

But I would not interpret this sublime text to suit

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the purpose of my own heart's desire. The love of which Jesus speaks is first of all the divine emotion in which souls are born again, in which friendships are conceived that last through time and eternity, in which self burns out for others, and in which is created that spiritual unity, that oneness, which shall at last make organic union either inevitable or unnecessary.

The United Church of China, the rising indigenous church of South India, the Presbyterian union in Scotland, and the Congregational-Christian amalgamation in the United States cheer us on our way. We shall continue to strengthen our cooperative enterprises at home and abroad. We shall reaffirm our endorsement of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and join with our fellow Christians on every occasion when in community, state, national and international affairs the kingdom of God would be compromised by less than a united command.

Finally, to follow Jesus Christ means to preach him as the world's only sufficient saviour. The church needs to advertise seriously the fact that it has a remedy for sin, sin personal and sin public. We need to think more

of Christ and less of the present crisis in the individual life and in society—less of this crisis without Christ. The presentation of the gospel as good news, the extending of the invitation for men to confess their sins and change their ways, may be as powerful today as it was when Joseph Parker thundered in City Temple and when David James Burrell came with his golden voice to Fifth Avenue. It is Jesus as the only sufficient saviour for life and for all of life that the world needs.

Will this preaching be doctrinal? Yes, and doctrinal in the sense that those doctrines that may be translated into human experience, known and lived in the home, school, industry, and in government have a right to claim the time and passion of the Christian ministry. But in these days it is a crime against Calvary for Christians to do balancing stunts on theological pin points. Paul is right; it is the "spirit" and not the "letter" that "giveth life." "Faith is the victory that overcomes the world."

Here and nowhere else lies the hope of Christianity's triumph in the world. And with this triumph stands or falls the hope of man—man's hope for justice and peace; man's hope for all else in which life is worth the living; man's hope for time and for eternity.

> Go preach the kingdom is at hand,
> The king is at the gate.

"Lovest Thou Me?"

By John A. Dykstra

Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? John 21:15.

IN the last analysis it is love that counts. Life's supreme question concerns the heart, not the brain. It is not a matter of how much we know but how much we love. To his parents the child's "I love you" means infinitely more than "I know you."

Without love everything else proves a failure. Paul wrote: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels but have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And if I have all faith so as to remove mountains and have not love I am nothing. If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor and if I give my body to be burned and have not love it profiteth me nothing."

Peter learned that love is the greatest thing in all the world when, at the lakeside, the Master asked him, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me"?

Do you remember with what vehemence Peter had denied Jesus in the judgment hall? As he was standing near a fire of coals a maid approached him with this taunt, "You are one of his disciples." Very emphatically he retorted, "I am not." Shortly after another, pointing to Peter, remarked to those in the room, "He is one of them." This charge also Peter flatly denied. Some time had elapsed before he was asked by the kinsman of Malchus whose ear had been cut off in the garden, "Did I not see thee with him in the garden"? A strange explosion now took place in the soul of Peter as he attempted to certify his denial with oaths and curses.

One day last spring when the snows were melting, the rushing waters flowing along a railroad track were undermining it. A section gang was hard at work damming off the waters from the track. Greeting these men I referred to a C.C.C. camp near by. At that one of the workers burst out in a deluge of profanity. "Men," I said, "There are two kinds of dams; the dam which you are building here is constructive; it will save this track. But what good are the damns of the tongue"? How idiotic it is to curse and swear! Can one be in his right mind when one damns the hand that feeds us? Are we not beside ourselves when we curse the God who lends us breath? It is almost unthinkable that a disciple like Peter could have cursed God as he did. Yet let us today who think that we stand take heed lest we also fall. When the circumstances are right and the provocation great we also shall deny the Master unless we rely upon divine strength.

A BETRAYAL OF TRUST

This base denial of Peter had scarcely been made when a cock crowed and Jesus turned to look upon his fallen disciple. His eyes did not flash with lightnings of anger. Peter caught at a glance their message of wounded love. As he left the judgment hall weeping bitterly the depths of his soul were broken up. Could the Lord ever love him again? Had he not forever forfeited the discipleship?

In a betrayal of trust there is always danger of being permanently disqualified. Paul said: "I buffet my body to keep it under, lest having preached to others I myself should become a castaway." A servant of God may do a thousand good things, but let him do one very base thing and he loses his standing and his influence is gone. It was not strange that Peter from the depths of his soul cried out, "O Lord, lovest thou me"? Had not Peter sensed the love of the Master in that look he might have followed the example of Judas and taken his own life.

Nor should we overlook just at this point the power of friendship as it comforted the heart of Simon. After John had taken Mary, the mother of Jesus, to his own house he went out to seek his intimate companion. Is it not significant that on the resurrection morning Peter is abiding at the home of John? What light of hope gleamed through the darkness of Peter's troubled soul as the disciple whom Jesus loved gave him his assurance that he was not cast off. How fortunate we are if we have good friends! How happy we ought to be in that friend who sticketh closer than a brother!

JESUS' LOVE FOR PETER REVEALED

The Lord made his love for Peter very plain. Listen to the message of the angel to the women at the open sepulcher: "Go and tell my disciples *and Peter* that I go before you into Galilee." Peter received special mention. Bearing in mind that Peter is the moving spirit behind Mark's gospel and also that it is Mark's gospel alone that records this mention of Peter by name, it becomes very evident that Peter very highly appreciated this recognition. It was so meaningful to him because it assured him that the Lord loved him still.

On that Easter Sunday Peter discovered that the love of Christ is as measureless as the sea, for some time during that day the Lord appeared to Peter. Paul tells us

"he was seen also of Cephus." And Luke discloses the tremendous effect of that appearance unto Peter upon the lives of other of the disciple band. When these heard from the women that Jesus was arisen from the dead they received the message as an idle tale, but when Peter affirmed to them that he had seen Jesus they believed. As the two men from Emmaus came in to testify that they had discovered the risen Lord in the breaking of the bread, the disciples confirmed their testimony by saying, "He is risen indeed and hath appeared unto Simon."

What does the Lord's love for Simon mean to us today? Can we doubt that he loves us? Think of your failures, your sins. Are any of them more scarlet-dyed than the base denials of Simon? Shall we not arise from the contemplation of this scene with the conviction that the Lord has not ceased to love us? It is not necessary for us to have concern about his love for us; we need to concern ourselves about our love for him. If we love him we can be persuaded that nothing shall separate us from him, and we may sing:

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

DISAPPOINTED FISHERMEN

Let us now think more definitely concerning the Lord's "Lovest thou me"? Before his crucifixion Jesus had told his disciples that after his resurrection he would meet them on a mountain in Galilee. On the resurrection day they were told that he had already gone before them into Galilee. How strange that the disciples did not immediately leave Jerusalem and set their faces northward to meet him. Eventually when they did go into Galilee they went not to the mountain but to that lake where some of them had first learned to know Jesus. By its blue waters they stood, not by his appointment, but owing to their disappointment. They were somewhat bewildered, not because they doubted the resurrection of Jesus, but rather because they had no definite program.

Walking on the much-trodden shore, listening to the lapping waters, seeing the old, familiar boat tugging at its anchor—what is more natural than the longing of a seasoned fisherman to cast the net into the sea once more? Peter said, "I go a fishing." Six friends were ready to step into the boat with him and did.

The fishing trip gave them a diversion and a pastime. It quieted their nerves. But as for fish, it was a failure. Every effort resulted in an empty net. Fishing is often like that. Fishermen come home with empty creels far more frequently than with many fish. And it is typical too, for how frequently in life the nets we pull up are empty. We do not get what we would like to have. Often too in Christian service nothing is taken in the gospel net. It is hard to fish where one feels there are no fish to be caught. A passer-by said to a boy fishing in a pond, "Son, what are you fishing for"? "Sharks," was the reply. "Don't you know that there are no sharks in that pond"? "Yep," said the boy, "but there's nothing else in it either so I might as well be fishing for sharks." That is the spirit of a true fisherman!

Peter and his friends, of course, knew that there were plenty of fish in the Sea of Galilee. You and I know that there are multitudes of fish for the gospel nets, yet for all that the night sometimes brings nothing.

The first streaks of dawn were breaking over the hills of Moab when the disciples decided to quit. The homes of the slumbering villagers near by were beginning to be visible. As they rowed toward the shore they saw the flicker of a fire and a figure near by—perhaps a fisherman like themselves preparing his morning meal. As

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they pulled near to the shore a voice called out to them, "Children have you any meat"? They answered, "Nothing."

Then he told them to cast on the right side of the boat, which they did. Their great catch surprised them and the discerning John cried, "It is the Lord." How frequently our failures give the Lord a chance to reveal himself unto us.

As through some ruined abbey's broken walls
Glimmers all night the vast and solemn sea,
So through our broken hopes the brightness falls
Of all eternity.

Peter leaped into the sea and was first to stand in the presence of the Lord. Dripping wet he crowded close to the fire of coals. Did it remind him of another fire?

JESUS AND OUR NEEDS

Imagine how eagerly those hungry fishermen must have looked at the meal that the Lord was preparing. The Master bade them bring of the fish they had caught and gave them a share in the preparation of the meal.

In this great work of the kingdom the Master always needs the cooperation of his disciples. Notice that Jesus never overlooked any of the needs of his friends. Anyone who loves the out-of-doors can appreciate how hungry those fishermen were and with what relish they must have eaten what the Lord had prepared.

After Jesus had supplied their physical needs he addressed himself in the words of our text to Peter: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these"? Why did the Lord ask Peter? Did Simon love more because he had leapt into the sea and was first to reach the place where Jesus was? I think it was something else that the Lord had in mind. Before his crucifixion the Master had said, "All of you shall be offended because of me." "Though all these should be offended, yet will not I," replied Peter.

PETER'S FINAL RELIANCE

Alas, Peter had not made good his promise. John had done far better than he. Aside from his sleeping in the garden John had kept close to his Master. Peter had learned his lesson. There were no more odious comparisons. Relying upon the omniscience of his Lord, he answered: "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee."

A second time Jesus asked, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me"? The "more than these" is now omitted. Once more Peter, resting upon that power of Christ to read the thoughts and intents of the heart, repeats: "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." Then for the third time Jesus inquired, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me"? At this Peter was grieved. I imagine that in the twingling of an eye the whole denial scene flashed before him. Again he heard the cock crow; again he saw the look of wounded love; again he went out and wept bitterly. Grieved to the depths of his heart, he cried: "Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee."

He had publicly denied his Lord three times; three times he had now also publicly confessed his love for the Lord. How blessed must have been his sense of forgiveness and how thankful he must have been for his complete reinstatement in the Master's service. And is not this the only way that the fallen servant can be completely restored today?

A GREAT TRUST

Love, you see, is the basis of all usefulness in the kingdom. Lovest thou me? "Feed my lambs." It is a great responsibility to be intrusted with the lambs of the flock. "Lovest thou me"? "Feed my sheep." "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold; them also must I bring that there may be one fold and one shepherd." Here we have the making of a missionary and every Christian ought to be a missionary. We are here on business for the King. Love is the only constraint that will enable us to do our work. The love of Christ is the motive of all sacrifice and service for the salvation of human life.

As Jesus puts the question to each of us, can we say:

> My Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine,
> For thee all the follies of sin I resign;
> My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art thou,
> If ever I loved thee, my Jesus 'tis now.

"That Thy Faith Fail Not"

By Edward Dawson

Simon, Simon, Satan has claimed the right to sift you all like wheat, but I have prayed that your own faith may not fail. Luke 22:31, 32. (Moffatt)

THE memorable setting for these tender, heart-searching words of Jesus is the upper room. The celebration of the Passover feast had been completed. The institution of the sacramental supper had followed. A petty contention among the disciples as to which of them was to be accounted greatest in the kingdom of heaven had broken the peace and fellowship of that final meeting of master and disciples, who had been in closest association for three great, swiftly passing years. One can sense the embarrassing hush which must have fallen upon the company when, in warning language, Jesus exposes the worldly ambitions which possessed their hearts in seeking personal preferment and privilege to the disadvantage of others. Like ourselves, these servants of Christ needed to fight the temptation for applause and personal recognition!

Here was a crisis hour in the training of these men who so soon were to be the Lord's trusted ambassadors to an unfriendly world. Yet what patience, what unrelinquishing love, what sympathetic understanding our Lord exhibits in the presence of his disappointment in these learners—even then Jesus fails not to recognize their ministry of love. "But ye are they who have continued with me in my trials; so even as my Father has assigned me royal power I assign you the right of eating and drinking at my table in my kingdom and of sitting on thrones to rule the twelve tribes of Israel."

As yet, however, these men but little understand or dimly perceive what severe testings they are to meet before they gain these thrones. They are unaware of the subtlety and the power of Satan's opposition and the battles they are to have with his marshalled forces. Knowing their unseen danger, Jesus warns them, singling out his self-confident disciple through whom to advise them of the craft of their formidable adversary. "Simon, Simon, Satan has claimed the right to sift you all as wheat."

There are two important facts every Christian ought to have in mind. On the one hand, he should know the source of his siftings, and on the other hand, the source of his sustaining power. We need to know that he who rebelled against the holy will of God among the angels of heaven and whom Jesus saw, as lightning, fall from heaven, is here on earth seeking to thwart that holy will from being done on earth as it is done in heaven. Before God's presence in heaven, it would seem, every believing, earnest servant of God, actively engaged on earth in Christian living, has an accuser and an advocate. Whether one fails or is sustained in one's life siftings depends upon whose servant in very deed one is. The accuser is Satan who claimed a similar right to sift God's servant Job, as he claimed in the case of

Peter. The advocate and divine sustainer is Jesus who said to his beloved disciple, "I have prayed that your own faith may not fail." Henry W. Longfellow voices this truth:

Satan desires us, great and small,
As wheat to sift us, and we all
Are tempted;
Not one, however rich or great,
Is by his station or estate
Exempted.

OUR LORD'S INTERCESSION

In the prayer of Jesus for these threatened disciples, unconsciously facing an unrecognized, subtle adversary, we learn what, in his mind, is a Christian's most important possession for meeting life's siftings and for triumphantly facing its adversities. This is plainly seen in his great intercessory prayer. It was not that they might be relieved or spared the testing responsibilities of the world life in which they were to do their work, such as its troubles, its trials, its poverties, its bereavements and bodily sufferings, but rather that their one all-conquering weapon of faith might not fail them. A Christian's most dangerous difficulties are not outward; they are inward and spiritual. "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one." Jesus knew the power of the evil one and how deadening it could be to a soul unsupported by the grace of God.

St. Paul, who never underestimated the power of Satan, voices the same tender concern for his fellow Christians in his Ephesian letter: "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." The burden of the Master's intercession for his disciples is "above all" that their shield of faith shall not fail them. The Christian's primary grace, his all-powerful possession for coming through life's siftings undefeated, is his own unfailing faith.

Life's defeats and failures may be traced to a loss of this priceless possession which is a gift of God secured through prayer. St. Paul makes this plain: "God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." To the Ephesians he writes: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Faith, as Westcott defines it, is "a principle of knowledge, a principle of power, a principle of action." It is a divine bestowment by which men do impossible deeds and win otherwise impossible victories; but we cannot create it.

THE PRIMARY IMPORTANCE OF FAITH

Jesus makes faith the essential requisite of all his ministries and miracles. He could save or heal none, nor could he do his mighty works in Nazareth because of their unbelief. Beyond the shadow of a doubt here is the chief concern which lies upon the heart of our living Lord "who is even now at the right hand of God where he ever liveth to make intercession for us." Can we doubt his praying right now that the church's faith fail not in this present day of sifting which has fallen upon it? What we find him looking for, hoping everywhere to find, deeply moved when he did find it, always rewarding wherever it was given to him, was childlike faith in human hearts, which possession alone is the assurance of heavenly things. That faith is the mighty link connecting the infinite resources of God with the needs of men was pressed upon every soul approaching Jesus for help. "According to your faith, so be it unto you." "Thy faith hath saved thee." To the question of the powerless disciples at the foot of Mt. Tabor, "Why could not we cast him out?" Jesus replied: "Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith like a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place: and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." "When the Son of Man cometh will he find faith upon the earth?" So great importance did our Lord attach to the one possession by which his disciples could withstand all of life's siftings. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Will the church of our day, during the winnowing processes at the hands of the world which sees in its present life so much that is secular and irrelevant to its primary mission, keep its faith so open toward Jesus Christ that he may be able to pour his strength and love out through it upon the task of world redemption?

FAITH UNCONQUERABLE

What is true faith? The faith which is the keystone of the arch of our Christian religion? The faith that has enabled the saints of God to subdue kingdoms, work the works of righteousness and obtain the promises? The Heidelberg catechism gives this clear definition: "Faith is a certain knowledge, whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in his word, an assured confidence which the Holy Ghost works by the gospel in my heart." In the thought of the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, "Faith means we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see." That his church might be spared the futility of unbelief, cut itself off from him through loss of a living faith, we believe, is even now the burden of our Master's unceasing intercessions. "I have prayed that your own faith fail not."

Let us make some practical applications of this possession which our Lord prays shall not fail us in life's sifting crises.

Our Lord continues to pray for all disciples who, in life's siftings, are tempted to lose faith in God. If Satan can rob Christians of their faith in God, he is accomplishing his purpose. The skepticism taking possession of many minds in the modern testings of faith, drawing multitudes away from reliance upon God, and leaving them in despair and fear and utter confusion of heart, is the work of the evil one. We share the conviction of Dr. Charles E. Schaffer, who writes: "Skepticism lurks in our literature, it is enmeshed in our educational system, it appears in our politics, it is ingrained in our economic and industrial order."

From personal experience we know how subtly skepticism and unbelief lay their tentacles upon the strongest of hearts, especially upon the hearts of our younger Christians whose minds, unfortunately, have been exposed to this modern skepticism concerning God,

as revealed in Jesus, which strangles the Christian's vital life. Much of our modern psychology is representing God as impersonal, as force, as law, and along with humanism and naturalism, would set up for our worship a humanly conceived and humanly fashioned god.

We also can see the dreadful thing which Ezekiel wrote he saw. Said he: "I saw about five and twenty men standing with their backs toward the temple of the Lord," meaning the Shekinah, symbol of God's presence, "and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east."

Myriads in our country today are substituting and

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worshiping the material creations while denying their dependence upon the divine Creator. These, among whom are some of our best educated and most intelligent people, are inheriting the precious legacy of the privileges of the gospel of Christ, preserved for them through the church of God, and yet with base ingratitude affront this benevolent and gracious God by turning their backs upon him. Surely this is the subtle work of Satan. Through these perverted and darkened minds, so utterly adverse to divine things, does he attempt to destroy faith in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let all loyal Christians earnestly unite their prayers with Christ that their faith in God fail not, and though the siftings of life tend to weaken trust in a sustaining providence let them, in the language of Job, cry, "Though he slay me, yet will I serve him."

Is there a greater need for these sifting days than that people should dare to rely upon their best beliefs about God, as unfolded to us and so beautifully exemplified and interpreted by Jesus? We plead that we dare to trust in the God and Father of whom Jesus says, "Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father's notice."

Oh, for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe;

That will not murmur or complain
Beneath the chastening rod;
But in the hour of grief or pain,
Will lean upon its God.

Then, too, we must believe that Jesus prayed that Peter's faith fail not in his brother men. "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," commands Jesus. It is as though he said: "Out of thy siftings will come enlarged charity and tolerance toward thy fellow men and a new faith in their inherent values." As representatives of the kingdom of God, which is a kingdom of love and brotherhood, going out after the resurrection of their Lord to proclaim the gospel of the Son of God, these men must possess an undiscourageable faith in their brother men. They must love them and believe them worthy of highest confidence. Frequently we hear of people who have been deceived or betrayed or have suffered severe losses at the hands of others saying, "I have lost all confidence in everybody; I can no longer trust anyone." Well, that leaves one in a very lonely world. Such rash statements fall unthinkingly from the lips when the heart is hot with the hurt of a personal injury or has been basely betrayed by one who had been implicitly trusted.

THE SPIRITUAL ANSWER TO CIVIC PROBLEMS

A true analysis of our world depression would place its finger upon loss of confidence in one another as one of its chief causes; second, of course, to the loss of faith in God. It is true men have many reasons, falling within the range of their own personal experience, which account for this loss of confidence. We have the deplorable situations of men ruthlessly exploiting and preying upon their fellow men by many crafty and selfish means, often with violent hands. If a smallpox epidemic were as prevalent as the modern crime wave, we would marshal every known agency at our command to stamp it out. Crime, like a dreaded epidemic, sweeps the country. Unprecedented and ingenious racketeering, bands of consciousless bandits, murderers felling faithful and courageous officers of the law, thieves and gamblers, fearless of law and often conniving with law officials, and kidnapers infest our communities. Men, women and children are on the verge of starvation and destitute of clothing while an abundance of these necessities fills our storehouses. With it all we raise so little serious protest. These things account for much of our destroyed confidence in our fellow men.

When a people lose faith in a personal God and Father who has created man in his own image, they do not have to go far to lose faith in the value of a human life and confidence in their brother men. All this mistrust, suspicion and loss of confidence, which so tremendously influences human relations, it is admitted, does exist and everyone who gives it thoughtful consideration knows it must be changed.

Now, opposed to this undermining distrust and loss

of faith in human personality and the worth of a human soul in the sight of God, stands Jesus, in teaching and practice building up the kingdom of God on the basis of faith in his fellow men. What faith he had in men of every social grade! How he trusted them, even when they exhibited weakness of character! How he discovered for them their own worth before God, and inspired them with his own confidence, saying, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." In the atonement on the cross he reveals God's estimate of a soul and the price heaven is ready to pay for its complete redemption. Dare we place a lower value upon the souls of our brother men or believe in them less than he?

The endurance of the nation; the stability and growth of the church, the perpetuation of the home, success in business and industry all rest upon the foundation of faith in one another. One of the finest illustrations glorifying the worth of human personality is the noble story of Martha Beery, told by Tracy Byers, lovingly known among her beloved people of our Southern Mountains as "The Sunday Lady of 'Possum Trot." Her faith in the inherent worth and possibilities of these mountain peoples of Georgia beautifully exemplifies her Master's love for and faith in God's beloved children of every social order and race. We believe Jesus prays right now that our faith fail not in our fellow men and in the worth of their lives before God.

FAITH IN GOD'S WILL

Then, too, Jesus prayed that Peter's faith fail not in the revealed will of God.

Seldom has the spirit of fear, confusion and defeatism so firmly laid hold of the hearts of men as today. And there was never more need than now that men's faith in the word of God and the tested traditions and unshaken truths of our Christian faith shall not fail them.

Readers are familiar with that story concerning Martin Luther which relates how, on one occasion, he was quite overcome and dejected with discouragement and the spirit of defeat, due to unusual siftings by antagonists to his cause. It made him strangely downhearted and gloomy for a period. He seemed not to be able to throw off his mood. One day, as he entered his home, he found his faithful wife dressed in mourning. At once the heroic leader inquired who had died. His wife replied, "You seem to act as though God had died." The rebuke was sufficient for the great reformer.

No, God is not dead. His word and his promises stand unshaken; his laws are unchanged and unchangeable. His father love is as sure and as deep at this hour as when the angels announced to the shepherds the birth of his only begotten Son, who came to destroy the works of the devil, and to deliver men from the bondage of sin. Faith in God's revealed word and will, promises, laws, love and infinite wisdom will cast out fear, calm confusion, quiet our straining, and turn our moods of defeatism into songs of victory. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Lord, give us such a faith as this,
And then, whate'er may come,
We'll taste, e'en here, the hallowed bliss
Of an eternal home.

Knowing Oneself

By Malcolm James MacLeod

"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" Romans 7:24.

PAUL calls himself a wretched man because he finds himself such a puzzling contradiction. He doesn't seem able to understand himself. I want to do the correct thing, he says, but somehow or other I can't do it. I do not do as I'd love to do; on the contrary I oftentimes do what I hate to do. I find a law in my members that when I would do good evil is present with me; "Miserable wretch I, who shall deliver me?"

And there was nothing put on about it; he was sincere. He meant what he said. Sometimes we say hard things about ourselves without really meaning them. I've heard people in prayer meeting telling the Lord what loathsome rascals they were but they didn't actually mean it. If you were to say it you would most likely hear from them. You would be dipping your hands in boiling water. Paul meant what he said, every word. He felt himself to be two men.

"Within my earthly temple there's a crowd:
There's one of us that's humble, one that's proud,
There's one that's broken-hearted for his sins,
And one that unrepentant sits and grins.
There's one that loves his neighbor as himself,
And one that cares for naught but fame and pelf.
From much perplexing care I would be free
If I could once determine which is me."

There was a great preacher in Liverpool some years ago. His name was Dr. Brash. His life has been written by his son. The book is called "Light and Love." He suffered greatly from angina. In the book you will see a photo of him propped up in bed when one of the attacks came on. One night he suffered terrible agony. "But when I went into his room in the morning," says the son, "he seemed bright and happy. I went up to him and I said, 'Father, if ever there was a saint you are one.' "

"Oh my son," he said, "don't say that! Because I feel as if I were more like *a hound of hell.* Never speak of me as a saint."

"Well," the son remarked, "I know your life, father. And I know it's all of a piece."

The daughter was listening outside in the hall, trying to keep back the tears. A little later she came into the room with her father's breakfast, and with a twinkle in her eye she said: "Here, old hound of hell, here's your breakfast." He smiled back at her and whispered, "Oh well, dear, maybe it isn't quite that bad."

But be that as it may, I make bold to claim that there never was a saint who did not feel a good deal as Paul felt. An American naturalist tells how he found on the Atlantic coast the skeleton of an eagle with an iron clamp clinging to one of its feet. Hundreds of miles away the noble bird had fallen into the trap. Then it flew trap and all, until worn out by the burden it dropped on the margin of the sea—it's torture still clinging to it. Many a soul is like that. Who can read the life of even a man like St. Augustine without realiz-

ing the bitter struggle that great saint of God had with his bodily passions. They dogged him from his youth almost to the end. In his tale of Eugene Aram, Lord Lytton leads us back to the modest country home of a great scholar. He gives us a peep into his life, showing us a calm thoughtful man, in delicate health and coveting solitude. None of the neighbors knew him except by sight, but they watched him and they noticed that he was tender-hearted to the poor; that walking in the garden he would stoop to remove a worm rather than hurt it. And yet the man was a *murderer*. It's rather a weird story. Stevenson must have been thinking of it when he wrote his Jekyll and Hyde.

Now the trouble with most of us is that we do not really know ourselves. Some of us have never taken the time or the trouble to put a few questions to our own hearts and wait for the answers. You recall the old advice inscribed in marble over the Delphic temple: "Know thyself." It still remains the epitome of wisdom. Countless the pilgrims that went to consult the old oracle but to every one came this advice, "Know thyself." And to know oneself is far from being the simple thing it seems. It's no easy task to master the intricate workings of this human soul of ours. Doesn't Richard Baxter tell us he was seven years studying himself and trying to get acquainted with his own heart. Because for one thing, we are not just a bundle of habits as the behaviorists are telling us. If that were true life would have no meaning, no purpose. If the good life is nothing but a collection of pious habits and the bad life just a collection of evil habits then what becomes of our personality? We are only robots. Everything that we do rather is an expression of our real self. The eye cannot see itself, the tongue cannot taste itself, the hand cannot grasp itself, the soul cannot analyze itself.

"O wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oorsels as ithers see us."

There is one word that is greatly overworked today and that is the word psychology. Psychology is the science of ourselves. A book recently published in entitled "The Psychologies of 1930." I noticed in glancing over it that there are about a dozen types of psychological variation on the intellectual counter today. We hear of the psychology of this, the psychology of that, the psychology, in fact, of pretty nearly everything.

I have been reading the newspaper report of the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science held up here in Cambridge two weeks ago. One of the speakers said that it would take a man 100,000 years to count the atoms in one's brain and he adds they revolve around each other with laws as fixed as the laws that guide the planets. And we're all different. That's the standing wonder of it. One of the great discoveries of the last century was the discovery that the finger prints of all men differ. Every police department in the civilized world makes use of this fact today. Millions of impressions have been taken and no two have been found alike. Today criminals are beginning to use rubber gloves. No two people are alike in physical make-up, or mental energy units, or emotional reactions, or spiritual values. No two are alike in handwriting or palmistry or footprints or for that matter in anything. No two voices are identical in timbre, tone, color, quality or pitch. I have known many young fellows troubled over their future. They can't for the life of them figure out what they were meant to be. They don't know whether God has given them ten talents or five or one or maybe none at all. What a vast and complicated subject this knowledge of oneself is!

But I believe it can be had and I believe the best way to get it is through a knowledge of God. The best way to get a knowledge of ourselves, I repeat, and the only way to get a thorough knowledge of ourselves is through a knowledge of God, and when I say a knowledge of God I mean a knowledge of Jesus Christ. When we get this knowledge then we are in the line of his leading. He directs us. He shows us the way to go. He reveals us to ourselves. He knows us altogether. And in Dr. Bushnell's famous phrase, "Isn't every man's life a plan of God?"

KNOWLEDGE CREATES HUMILITY

Now suppose we had this authentic knowledge of ourselves what effect would it have upon our lives? Don't you feel for one thing that it would make us very humble? Why are people proud? It is, is it not, because they do not know themselves? And they do not know themselves because they do not know him, "Who did not lift up nor cause his voice to be heard in the street." Just in proportion as God fades away from the life, just in that proportion does pride begin to show its face in the picture. If we have before us every day a divine Father in whom we live and move and have our being, then pride becomes unthinkable. For what have we to be proud of? What have we that we have not received? And if we received it how can we be proud if it? Isn't it a gift? A man is proud of his mighty brain. Where did he get that mighty brain? A young girl is proud of her ravishing beauty. Where did she get her ravishing beauty? Aren't these things gifts, I say? How preposterous to boast about a gift!

Mr. Bryan once said that most men who pride themselves on being selfmade usually worship their maker. There's a little room at Niagara where a man sits quietly and with his levers releases half a million horse power. But how can he feel proud because of it? It is not his own power he is liberating. He simply releases the power of God. And if you have any gift of brain or skill or insight or cleverness that's what it is, a gift, a Godsend pure and simple. Nebuchadnezzar had a habit of walking around the walls of Babylon and communing with himself in an arrogant manner: "Is not this great Babylon which I built for the royal dwelling place by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?" He was a pitiable picture. He forgot the thousands of slaves who had really done the job. Little wonder he was toppled over from his pinnacle of conceit.

The great evil of pride is that it consists in a sense of superiority. It puts on airs. It leads one to enter the citadel of one's own thought and from that vantage point look down on all who pass below. It is like those tides in the Bay of Fundy which rise to a great height but fall correspondingly low and in their fall lay bare the cruel bars that ground the ships. This is its great evil, I repeat. With a swelling up of one's own im-

portance goes usually a scorn for others. Conceit is twin brother of contempt. "And he spake this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others." Perhaps there is no truer test of the magnanimity of a man's nature than the simple question, How does he treat his subordinates? Is he considerate toward them or is he scornful? Does he speak to the servant in his house with habitual harshness or does he place a moral and human value on her work? There is an old saying that "Nobody who is somebody ever looks down on anybody." How easy to say, "I'm just as good as you are," but the Master turns that upside down and teaches us to say, "You're just as good as I am." The story is told of Principal Cairns, the great Scotch theologian and philosopher, that, when he was dying he was heard to whisper, "You go first, I follow." It was a common expression of his when he was leading a brother minister on to the pulpit. He was always taking second place himself although no man was more entitled than he to take first place. It was a beautiful gesture, with its graceful bow, "You go first, I follow."

THE HUMILITY OF THE GREAT

All great men are humble. Here's Moses, called to be the leader of his people. "Who am I," he asked, "that I should go unto Pharaoh? I am not eloquent. I am slow of speech." Here's Jeremiah summoned to be a prophet to the nations. "Ah, Lord," he pleaded asking to be excused, "I know not how to speak: I am nothing but a child." I remember reading the speech that Lord Kelvin made at a banquet given in his honor by the University of Glasgow on the occasion of the completion of fifty years of service in the chair of natural philosophy. His health was proposed, and when he rose to reply what did he say? Did he refer to his own wonderful discoveries and boast of them? Mark his words: "As I look back on my work the chief impression I get is one of failure." Or listen to Professor Einstein: "Many a day I realize how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of my fellow men, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received." Or our own immortal Lincoln. Was there ever a lowlier man? When he was elected President these were his words: "I must in candor say that I do not think myself qualified to be president of the United States."

I think it well to keep reminding ourselves too that according to the appraisal of Jesus pride is one of the deadly sins. We all agree it is one of the commonest but we are apt to forget it is a sin our Lord particularly rebuked. I suppose the reason it is so common is because it has so many faces. There's the pride of birth, the pride of position, the pride of appearance, the pride of popularity, the pride of cleverness. There is almost no limit to the forms it takes. It is a magnifying glass that makes its owner feel surprisingly important. Unlike love, it vaunts itself; it is puffed up. How apt the word "puffed up!" We speak of a person as being "touchy." That is to say, nobody accepts his self-valuation. How many are not willing to be themselves. The world is full of failures who are not satisfied with being themselves but who are always trying to be somebody else. It is just another phase of this same vain glory. The preacher affects a sanctimonious tone. "I like the great Joseph Parker," said some one speaking of that wonderful man, "but I can't abide the little Joseph Parkers." We only get the right swing when we learn to be ourselves. Don't try to be a rubber stamp of anybody. Be your own natural self. What have we to be proud of anyway? If we only knew ourselves that calamity could never happen. Bird lovers tell us that the starling tries to mimic the note of the thrush but it makes a poor fist of it. You are God's workmanship. Let him use you

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just as he made you. Just be yourself. Do not pose. Be courageous to speak out your own convictions. The old minister's prayer at the ordination of a young student is worth remembering: "O Lord, make him good and then make him natural."

THE STRENGTH OF THE HUMBLE

It is rather an interesting fact furthermore, is it not, that humility is the only virtue that Jesus called attention to in himself. And we are to walk humbly with him. But that doesn't mean that we are to grovel in the dust. "You cannot very well walk on your two feet if your forehead is in the dust." Humility is not thinking disparaging things of oneself any more than thinking them about some other person. It is not self-depreciation. Neither is it condescension. Condescension is the counterfeit of humility. We must not confuse humility with humiliation. God wants us to honor ourselves. Believe your own thought. Trust your own mind. Respect your own principles. Salute your own manhood. Reverence your own soul. Humility is not a feeling of helplessness. It is a consciousness of strength.

It is adjusting ourselves to God and finding the secret of our power in him.

And how much the nations of the world need it as a national virtue! What is one of the underlying causes of war? It is the blustering bullying way, is it not, that nations have of asserting their supremacy. We will never have world peace until the nations of the world attain more national humility and less self-assertiveness. So long as we go strutting about Kaiser-like, sabre-rattling, and boasting of our own strength and insisting on our rights and reluctant to give up a shred of our sovereignty, so long will peace remain a dream. There is a patriotism which is a bragging, supercilious, perilous, thing. It looks upon its own race as chosen of God.

VANITY OF EMPIRE

Speaking of Winston Churchill, Kirby Page writes: "Like most men, it is the vanity of empire that affects him more than trade or profits." Rudolf Eucken, the German philosopher, said: "We have a right to say that we form the soul of humanity and that the destruction of German culture would rob world history of its deepest meaning." Did not Cecil Rhodes once say that he considered the British "the greatest people the world has even seen?" And did not a great American diplomat once stand up in public and wave the Stars and Stripes saying: "God has made nothing equal to the American people and I don't think He ever will or can." A spirit like this is the outstanding menace before the world.

Another result would be to fill us with a feeling of unworthiness. Self-satisfaction is due to self-ignorance and there is a very subtle peril in that state of mind. When a man says to himself, "I have arrived" he is telling the truth. He has arrived. He can go no further. He has reached his goal! I have just finished reading Vallery Radot's life of Pasteur. What a fascinating book it is! What a marvelous man! His sympathy, his humility, his reverence, his patience, his generosity, his absolute self-effacement, his gift for friendship. I lay it down with the feeling that I really know something of this wonderful man. Is there anything finer to read than a good biography? Sir William Robertson Nicol used to say that he never read a biography so poor that he didn't get something out of it. Dr. Alexander Whyte of Edinburgh kept his library in two sections. On one side he had his collection of biographies which consisted, we are told, of all or pretty nearly all the biographies that were ever written, and on the other side all the rest of his books.

CHAMPIONSHIP FORM

I have been playing golf for more than thirty years, although I am still a duffer. It was my privilege last spring to go around with a champion player. It was quite an event in my life, for I had never had such a golfing honor thrust on me before. And I never played so poorly. I was trying too desperately hard. He would outdrive me by about seventy-five yards. He nearly always got his par and often one below. He never took more than two putts on a green, often sank his ball in one. I usually took three. When we had finished the game and added up the score, he had negotiated the course in 72. I will not tell you how I functioned but I will tell you how I felt. I felt like throwing my clubs in the lake.

And that's how every soul feels when it comes to grips with Jesus Christ. That's how Peter felt. He felt like throwing his clubs in the lake too. The way to know oneself is to know him. When we stand in the presence of the Master everything becomes glaringly plain. The first time Peter really saw Christ that moment he saw himself and the cry that broke from his lips was, "Depart from me for I am a sinful man." When a man thus begins to be actually conscious of his own defects we know he is on the up-grade. At least he's looking that way. It may hurt, but hurting is not always a sinister sign. Sometimes it is a mark of health. Drowning we are told is a rather pleasant sensation. It is the resuscitation that is painful. That yarn of the youth who was struggling with his violin is not at all to me incredible. For years he toiled patiently and at last considered himself something of a virtuoso. But one day he went to hear Fritz Kreisler and when he came home he threw his instrument in the fire. I don't know whether the story is true or not, but I can understand his feelings perfectly. I never go to hear a great preacher myself without feeling like burning my manuscripts when I get back to my study.

GOD'S CRIPPLED CHILDREN

May I add one word more. My home in Bronxville is on a little hill. It is a fine slope for sledding. After a snowfall last winter you should have seen the children coasting down my driveway. Sometimes there would be fifteen or twenty boys and girls all having the time of their lives. It brought me back to my childhood. Now opposite my home on the other side of the road lives a little crippled fellow. He is about ten years of age. He can walk with great difficulty. And it is pathetic to see him sitting at the window watching the boys and girls playing and laughing and skiing and having a glorious time. They can do what he cannot do. Is there anything so touching as a crippled child? And what are any of us in God's sight but crippled children? When we come to know him we realize what helpless invalids we are. We become acutely conscious of our own enfeeblement. When a soul comes face to face with the great Master of life, it feels as the Apostle did, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" And that would be a hopeless business were it not that God's call is always to the impossible. He blots that word out of the Christian vocabulary altogether. Nothing is impossible with him. He can and will deliver me. "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me."

The Reformed Church in America Number

The ministers whose sermons appear in this issue were selected, not by the Editor of The Pulpit, but as the result of a ballot sent to all the ministers listed in the Reformed Church in America year book. These ministers were asked to name the preachers whom they would like to have represent their denomination in this special Reformed Church in America Number.

Church Women Facing A New Day

By McIlyar Hamilton Lichliter

Lawrence Hyde suggests that the people who are significant in this age are those who are able to orientate themselves to the potential rather than to the actual. It was this principle which led the women of the First Congregational Church of Columbus, Ohio to break with precedent and attempt a new program. The change involved no reflection upon the past. There was a history of unbroken loyalty to the church reaching back through the pastorates of Irving Maurer, Carl S. Patton, the thirty-six years of Washington Gladden, the ten brilliant years of the gifted Robert G. Hutchins on to the sacrificial service of Civil war days under the leadership of Edward P. Goodwin. It was only that the program had become stereotyped and crystallized. The Womens Guild had raised its money for missions and for local charity and church aid through bazaars, church suppers, and various kind of sales. The monthly meeting with an average attendance of not more than forty was just like any other woman's club.

FACING THE PROBLEM TOGETHER

The women faced this problem together. Every woman in the church was asked to reply definitely to five questions. (a) Have church women anything distinctive to contribute toward the solution of present day problems that other groups cannot or do not contribute? (b) In view of the increasing number of women's clubs, social groups and other activities for women, is there a real need for an organization of women in the church? Or, as an alternative, would it be better to make the family a unit in church societies, the men and women meeting together? (c) What do the women of this church really want, in provision for social contacts, in opportunities for study and discussion, in the field of community service? (d) Since missionary societies have been among the great educational forces in the world, why have church women, as such, taken so little interest in the larger aspects of international relations such as the world court, equitable trade relations, immigration, peace movements and the like? (e) If church women are asked to raise money for any purpose what means should be used—bazaars, sales, bridge parties, 'vanishing teas', or individual pledges?

These questions were discussed with great earnestness in small neighborhood groups and in larger conferences at the church. It is a rule in the First Congregational Church that we do not move forward in any change of policy unless we move together. In eighty-two years there has been no clash of factions within the church. Changes are made slowly and only after the fullest possible discussion. As a result of these conferences and with appreciative recognition of all that had been done in the past, the women decided to carry on with the Guild but to make radical changes in its program.

They agreed that society had a right to expect some unique and special service from women who profess loyalty to the ideals of Jesus. They agreed, also, that an organization of church women ought not to be just another club with a miscellaneous program. They faced the significant fact that the Guild was making little appeal to the university group and to the younger women. Out of the savings of the past the Guild made a generous contribution toward the furnishing of the Guild Room in the new church and then laid aside their money-raising function.

A DISTINCTIVE FUNCTION

There was a unanimous conviction that an approach should be made to social and economic questions in the spirit of Jesus. The Guild was seen to have a distinctive function quite different from that of the League of women voters and other civic and social organizations. The women of the church needed to be mobilized for peace, for better race relations, for good citizenship and law enforcement, for a higher type of motion pictures and better dramas, for the cultivation of a finer taste in art, literature and music, especially as these fine arts might be made to serve the cause of religion.

What resulted was really an adventure in adult education. A general program theme for the year was selected and eight luncheon meetings were planned beginning in October and ending in May. The June meeting was to be in the nature of a review of the year's work and was to include an outlook toward the new program year beginning in the autumn. These luncheon addresses were to be delivered by specialists, men and women from the faculty at Ohio State university, Ohio Wesleyan university and Oberlin and also by a carefully selected group of experienced clergymen. Each speaker was asked to furnish a syllabus which was mimeographed and distributed among the women of the Guild. Small reading groups followed the discussions.

SELF EXPRESSION

In the week following the monthly luncheon, six discussion groups meet either at the church or in homes to talk over the address of the preceding week on the basis of the assigned reading. The leaders of these discussion groups were carefully chosen, trained in the technique of modern group discussion and, in a conference of their own each month, they agree upon the salient ideas which were to be given prominence. The objective was not indoctrination but an encouragement to self-expression.

To sum up, the new program included preparatory reading, a highly specialized address with syllabus, and informal discussions with an opportunity for every woman to express herself. The response was thrilling. In three years of experimentation the average attendance at luncheons and discussion groups has been over

one hundred and fifty. It is not unusual for more than two hundred women to be present.

For the year 1931-32 the theme selected was "The Challenge of the Emerging Social Order to Church Women." The basic text-book was "A World Community" by John Herman Randall, with additional books suggested by each speaker. The following specific topics were presented: What is the emerging social order, disarmament, the welfare situation in Ohio, the economic chaos, with a consideration of communism and

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socialism, evaluating our present social order, with an inquiry into the possibility of salvaging the capitalistic system, dynamic religion, and new trends in Christian missions. All of these subjects, let it be remembered, were presented from the point of view of a Christian social conscience.

THE PROGRAM

In the year 1932-33 the theme was "Building a More Christian Social Order" and each address was to propose a constructive type of service which ought to be rendered by church women. The topics discussed were —the family, America and the world community, the church—a study in function, economic planning, social work in Columbus, the motion picture, understanding other races, and religious education.

So much had been said in two years concerning the leadership of Jesus that for the year 1933-34 the women asked the minister to give a series of monthly addresses on "the ideals and teachings of Jesus." These were not to be hortatory in character. They were to be critical appraisals of New Testament materials. The following were offered:—love, the motive power of life; almsgiving past and present, with a critique of community fund methods; the beatitudes; Jesus' teaching on wealth, with a discussion of family budgets, wages of maids, etc.; the principles of social justice, the religion which Jesus lived, and the kingdom and the church.

For the coming year the minister is to continue this special service for the women, speaking on "Great Religious Leaders and Their Influence Upon Our Day." Twenty-one names have been selected to be presented in groups of three short interpretative sketches. The list includes Asoka, Akbar the Great, Nanak; Ramabai, Vivekananda, Sadhu Sundar Singh; Pan Chao, K'ang Hsi, Sun Yat Sen; Honen, Nicheren, Kagawa; Martin Luther, Erasmus, Zwingli; Wycliffe, Wesley, Newman; Jonathan Edwards, Horace Bushnell, Washington Gladden.

Instead of monthly discussion groups the Guild will, next year, offer "Interest Study Groups" each of which will pursue one subject throughout the year. So far we have formal enrolments for the following: The Social Order, The Cultivation of the Spiritual Life, Music and Religious Drama of the Church, World Peace and World Fellowship, Community Service, and a Religious Book Study Club.

THE SERVICE GROUPS

In all this emphasis upon reading, study, listening and discussion the Guild does not overlook the important factor of expression through service. Twice a month a number of women meet to prepare hospital supplies for Fenchow, China and boxes for Pleasant Hill Academy in Tennessee. Another circle of women meets to sew for local charities, the Needlework Guild and the Gladden Community House. A Red Cross unit, which enrolled more than one hundred, prepares garments for the relief agencies and a trained sub-committee instructs unemployed women who come to the church for lessons in sewing, the care of children, and the preparation of family meals. A strong committee on community service cooperates with local social agencies and state-wide welfare activities by counsel and by furnishing volunteer workers in a score of fields. An equally strong committee on motion pictures keeps in touch with the state board of censors, preserves in scrap-book form the critique of pictures in "The Christian Century." distributes the Eastman pamphlets and reports items of interest.

The needs of the local church are not forgotten. New members are called upon, the pulpit flowers are taken to the sick each Sunday afternoon, there are frequent social gatherings throughout the parish and a number of church night suppers served at cost—all planned by the Guild.

FINANCING

All the old money-raising methods were laid aside. The Goodwin Plan would make no appeal to these church women who use the techniques of a new day. A budget is prepared which includes appropriations to home and foreign missions, scholarships for needy girls, local charities and miscellaneous needs of the Guild itself. This is mailed to every woman in the church exclusive of the business and professional women who have a society of their own—the Alice Gladden Club. On a Friday afternoon in October the women go out two by two to visit every women in the parish and ask for individual pledges. The budget is always raised easily, even in times of depression, because of the large volume of small gifts. This is true, also, of the finances of the church. No money-raising schemes of any sort are permitted. The individual pledge system, with appeals just once a year and money never mentioned again, has resulted in enough to meet all obligations every thirty days.

Sermons to Children

By John R. Wilkie

How a Cripple Saved a Life

MANY of the world's finest and most heroic deeds are done by humble, obscure men and women and boys and girls of whom the great world never hears. A rich man has set aside a large sum of money to be used in finding out and rewarding such heroes.

Several years ago a young girl was injured by the explosion of the gasoline in a motorcycle. So badly was she burned that the doctors said the only way of saving her life would be by the grafting of a lot of skin on the places where she had been burned. But where to get this large amount of skin was the question.

Just at this time there was in the same hospital where the girl had been taken a poor newsboy with a crippled leg. When he heard about the girl and what was needed to save her life he offered to have his crippled leg cut off on which there was skin enough to save the girl's life. When they told him it might cost him his own life his answer was: "What's the odds if it will only save her life. My crippled leg's no good to me anyhow, and it will only mean that I will have to use two crutches instead of one. Nobody will miss me if I go, so go ahead and cut it off, for I have no friends to worry if I die."

So they cut it off, and the skin from Bill's leg saved the life of Dora, but it meant the giving of Bill's own life, for the operation was too great for his poor weak body to withstand, and with the giving of his leg went his life.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friend." But when he lays it down for a stranger whom he has never seen nor known, what shall we say to this? No heroics, just a quiet, unselfish act such as won for many a one a monument or marble or bronze or a beautiful poem. Bill's last words were: "I am glad just to be a little help." Surely somewhere such unselfish sacrifice will find its reward.

The Camel's Nose

IN many parts of the world the camel has been and is still the faithful friend and companion of man. If you were living in Asia Minor today you would hear the musical tinkle of a bell coming down the dusty road, and by that you would know that the "camels are coming," often a long train of them loaded with great bales and bundles of tobacco, cotton, charcoal, and brushwood to be used in heating the ovens for baking the bread. Sometimes if you are driving your auto and meet one of these trains in one of the narrow winding streets so common there, it is quite a puzzle to figure out just how to get past without damaging either the auto or the camel and his load. With his great cushioned feet he is able to travel over the sand of the desert much better than your auto with its rubber tires, but woe to him if with his load he slips on the slippery paving stones of the city. He is almost sure to break a leg, and then his usefulness is over, for there is nothing to do but to kill him.

Naturally many stories have grown up about the camel. Let us hear one of them. An Arab with his camel was overtaken by the night, but that did not worry him, for he had with him his little tent just about big enough to cover him. He had just rolled up in his blanket to go to sleep when he heard a noise as if some one were trying to crowd into his tent. "What's that?" he exclaimed. "It's only I," said the camel, "It's so cold outside that I just wanted to get my nose in out of the cold." "Very well," said the Arab, "but don't come any further." But soon he was awakened by the camel which had now worked his front feet into the tent to get them warm, then in a little while he had worked in his body, then his hind feet, finally his tail. By that time the poor Arab had been pushed clean outside the tent and found himself shivering in the cold. The camel had gradually crowded him out of the tent!

So the Arabs tell this story to their children to show them how from small beginnings great results follow. "First the man took a drink, then the drink took a drink, then the drink took the man."

A Wayside Dream

A WORKING man was once breaking stones by the wayside. The sun was hot, he was weary and discouraged. Just then the king came driving by in his beautiful chariot drawn by two lively horses. "Oh," said the laborer, "How I wish I were the king, then I would not need to work so hard in this hot sun." Just then a good angel came along and said "You may be the king." So he was changed into a king dressed in royal robes, driving his chariot at full speed down the dusty highway while the people everywhere greeted him with shouts of welcome. But the day grew hot and the sun sent down its beams on the earth so strong that there was no way of escape from them. "Oh," said the king, "I wish I were the sun." Again his good angel appeared and said, "Very well, you may be the sun." So he was changed into the sun and sent his winged beams down on the earth so that men and beasts everywhere sought the shelter of the trees and the caves to get away from the terrible heat.

But presently a cloud appeared on the horizon and spread over the earth so that the power of the sun was brought to nothing. "Oh," said the sun, "I wish I were the cloud." "Very well," said the angel, "You may be the cloud." So he was changed into a cloud and sent down floods of water on the earth, washing up the trees by the roots and filling the streams to overflowing and sweeping away men and beasts by its irresistible power so that nothing could stand against it except one great rock against which it was powerless. It poured its mightiest streams against it and around it, but there it stood immovable. "Oh," said the cloud, "I wish I

were a man so that I might break that old rock into pieces."

Just then the man awoke from his dream, and there was the rock beside him, and there at his hand lay his great hammer with which he struck the rock a mighty blow that split it asunder, and soon it was broken into bits and strewn all over the road. What the king could not do with his royal power, what the sun could not do with his heat nor the cloud with its floods of water, the working man was able to do by the strength of his strong right arm and his trusty hammer.

For Him Who Lifts the Rock

ONCE there lived a king who ruled his people wisely and well. But whether it was the heat of the country or whether it was just in the nature of the people they were a lazy set, and none of them would do a thing if he could possibly get out of it. "Leave it for somebody else," was ever their motto. So the king decided he would teach them a lesson.

Near the town where he lived the road passed through a narrow pass between two steep hills. The king went there one night and scooped out a hole right in the middle of the road. This he lined with pebbles, then put into it a purse with several gold coins, then covered it over with a rock as big as he could move, and went back to his palace.

Next morning came along a farmer driving a cart loaded with hay. "Look at that big rock," he said. "Why doesn't somebody move it out of the road?" But it did not occur to him that he might be that somebody, and so he pulled his oxen to one side, although he almost upset his cart in so doing, and went on his way swearing at the lazy people who would not move the stone.

Soon came a soldier marching proudly along in his bright new uniform with his head up and his chin out as he had been taught to do. So of course he did not see the rock in the road, against which he struck his foot and sprawled in the dust. "Curses on the lazy people of this country who will not keep their roads in shape for an army," he exclaimed, brushing the dust as well as he could from his uniform, and went marching on his way. His chin was not so high, though, and his eyes kept nearer the ground, lest there should be other stones on the road.

Next came a company of merchants with a string of donkeys and pack horses going to the fair in the king's town where they hoped to sell their silks and spices at a good price. "This seems like a fine country to live in if they only had decent roads," said one of them as his donkey stumbled against the rock and fell to his knees and almost lost his pack in the ditch.

So it went on day after day and week after week, every one cursing the rock and the people who would not remove it, but none of them lifting a hand to move it. Finally the king called together his people about the rock and said to them.

"Three weeks ago I myself put this rock here in the road to see who would take it out of the way. For three weeks every one has passed by blaming his neighbor for not doing it, but not one doing anything himself. See what you all have missed." Then stooping down he pushed the rock aside and lifted out the bag he had placed there with all the gold coins still in it. Attached to the bag was a card with the words: "For the one who lifts the stone."

"See," said the people, "what we have lost because we expected others to do for us what we were too lazy to do for ourselves."

A Pastoral Prayer

By John A. Klaaren

UNTO THEE, who are the creator and sustainer of the universe, in whom we live and move and have our being, we come in prayer. We thank thee that in the Lord Jesus Christ we come not as aliens and foreigners, but as thy children, as fellow-citizens of the saints, and those who are of the household of God. We confess before thee our sins, and we beseech thee that for Jesus' sake thou wilt forgive them. Grant us peace in our own hearts through the realization that being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we also have access unto the grace wherein we stand. We thank thee, heavenly father, that thou didst so love the world, that thou didst give thine only Son that the world through him might be saved. We thank thee that he was wounded for our transgressions. We remember before thee those who are living as though there were no God and no Savior. We pray thee that thou wilt quicken them with thy Holy Spirit, that they be filled with a consciousness of their sins, and of their need of salvation. Grant that they may look to thee, having faith in the Savior, and that trusting in his finished work, they may pray the prayer of the publican: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

We remember before thee the people of this land of ours. There are so many who are sick; grant them healing of body. Be with those that mourn; may thy Holy Spirit comfort them, calling to their minds the promises found in thy word. We remember those who are in poverty; grant unto all their daily bread. Lead us out of the present chaos that soon there may be work for all, so that each shall be able to earn his livelihood. To that end grant wisdom to those in authority in our government. May they be Spirit led, and unselfish, ever seeking the welfare of the nation. In these days of testing may there be a searching of hearts, and may there be a seeking after thee. May there be a seeking of the Kingdom of God and of his righteousness. Wilt thou guide and bless each one of us in whatever circumstances we find ourselves; do unto us above our thinking or asking. And Father, when thou dost bless, grant unto us thankful hearts and consecrated lives. This we pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us, and gave himself for us. Amen.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

NORMAN VINCENT PEALE *is one of the* youngest ministers of the larger churches in New York, being only thirty-six. He is minister of the famed Marble Collegiate church. Formerly a Methodist, he was ordained to the ministry in 1922. Since then he has held pastorates in Berkeley, R. I., Brooklyn, N. Y. and Syracuse, N. Y. While in Brooklyn he built the membership of the Kings Highway church from 40 to 900 in three years. "Who's Who" lists him as a member of Phi Gamma Delta, of the Republican party and a Mason.

MILTON J. HOFFMAN *has been professor* of church history in the New Brunswick Theological seminary since 1925. Winner of a Rhodes scholarship from Michigan, he received his B.A. degree from Oxford University in 1912. He was formerly president of Central College, Pella, Iowa, and once headed the Latin department of Hope college. Dr. Hoffman is a member of the Holland-American Foundation and the American Church History Society. He has recently returned from a journey to the West Indies.

DANIEL ALFRED POLING *has held many* offices, but is probably best known as president of the International society of Christian Endeavor. He is editor in chief of the Christian Herald, a militant crusader in behalf of the dry cause, and was once pastor of the Marble Collegiate Reformed church in New York. He is the author of a dozen or more books, including John of Oregon, The Furnace, The Heretic, and Between Two Worlds, novels, and Youth and Life, Radio Talks to Young People, What Men Need Most, and Huts in Hell. He is chairman of the committee on temperance of the Commission on Federated Movements of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

JOHN A. DYKSTRA *is minister of the* Central Reformed church of Grand Rapids, Michigan. He attended Hope College, Princeton seminary and New Brunswick seminary and has held the following pastorates: First Reformed Church, Catskill, N. Y., 1912-1917. Hamilton Grange Reformed church, New York City, 1917-1919. He has been minister in his present church since 1919. In 1928 he was summer preacher at The Hague, Netherlands.

EDWARD DAWSON *is president of the* general synod of the Reformed Church in America, which held its one hundred and twenty eighth regular session in Grand Rapids, Michigan this summer. He is pastor of The Old First Protestant Reformed church in Acquackanonk, Passaic, N. J. This church was organized in 1693.

MALCOLM JAMES MACLEOD *is minister* of the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas, which is located at Fifth Avenue and Forty-eighth street, New York City. He has been for years the occupant of the pulpit of this famous church, which traces its history back to the Dutch founders of New Amsterdam. He is the author of Comfortable Faith, 1908; The Revival of Wonder, 1923; Songs in the Night, 1925, and When Morning Wakens, 1926.

JOHN A. KLAAREN *is minister of the* First Reformed Church of Roseland, Chicago.

MCILYAR HAMILTON LICHLITER *is pastor* of the "Washington Gladden church," the First Congregational in Columbus, Ohio. Trained for the ministry in the Methodist church, he was pastor successively of churches in Pitcairn, Pa., South Fork and Olean, New York, St. Louis, Mo., Baltimore, Md., and Cleveland, Ohio. He entered the Congregational ministry in 1919 and for five years was pastor of the Central church, Newton, Massachussetts. Since 1924 he has held his present position in Columbus.

DR. JOHN R. WILKIE, *author of the* children's sermons in this issue, is a member of the faculty of Whittier College, a Friend's school of Whittier, California. He is also president of the Southwestern Archeological Federation.

TITLES AND TEXTS — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

RONALD FREDERICKSON, Federated Church, Three Forks, Mont. "The Spiritual Use of Words." Ps. 19:14—"Let the words of my mouth . . . be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." Col. 4:6a—"Let your language be always seasoned with the salt of grace."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

Title of sermon

.....

Text used (Write out the text)

.....

Name of minister

.....

Name of church

.....

Address

A. E. ACEY, North Emporia (Methodist-Episcopal), North Emporia, Va. "Twice Told Tales." I John 1:21—"I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it."

FRED ELLSWORTH FRANKSON, First (Methodist-Episcopal), Green Bay, Wis. "High Living at Low Levels." Ps. 23:4—"Tho I walk thru the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou are with me."

CHAUNCEY R. PIETY, First Christian, Mt. Sterling, Ill. "Life's Intensity." Rev. 3:15—"I would thou wert cold or hot." John 13:1—"He loved them to the uttermost."

PHILLIPS E. OSGOOD, Emmanuel church, Boston. "Akrophobia: A Sermon on Ideal Ideals"—for young people. Eccl. 12:5—"Be not afraid of that which is high."

JOHN J. CASTLEBERRY, Walnut Hills Christian, Cincinnati, O. "Why Christianity Lives." John 7:46—"Never man spake like this man."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

ANOTHER united church on the mission field has been created, this time in Siam. It includes Presbyterians, Baptists, Churches of Christ (the British branch of the Disciples of Christ) and some other groups. The Christian and Missionary Alliance and the Anglicans are not participating. Protestantism in Siam is nearly 90 per cent Presbyterian, which fact naturally prompted a presbyterial polity for the new united "Church of Christ in Siam." This form of government was made acceptable to the other groups by the inclusion of a promise in the constitution of the new church providing that any participating denomination which accepts the bond of union (confession of faith) "may retain its original standards of faith and practice, except such faith and practices as are contrary to this constitution." This section was then specifically interpreted "to guarantee to such churches as practice the baptism of believers only, a continuance of that practice." Here is a distinctly new step in Christian unity. The two knotty problems in effecting such unions are the historic episcopate and immersion-baptism. This is the first time, so far as my knowledge goes, that the arrangement for Baptists and paedobaptists to join forces has been achieved. It should become a model for many other unions. What about the Baptists and the United Church of Canada?

Baptists and Paedobaptists Can Unite in One Church!

The Book of the Month

THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE FOR THE WORLD TODAY, *by nine writers—E. Stanley Jones, Kenneth Latourette, John A. Mackay, William Paton, Luther A. Weigle, Francis P. Miller, Henry P. Van Dusen, Francis J. McConnell, and Basil Mathews. The Round Table Press. $1.50.*

THIS BOOK cuts right into the marrow of our Christian problem. It is called a study of Christian missions, and it is that. But it goes so deep into the roots of Christian missions that it becomes a study of Christianity itself as Christianity confronts the total world situation. Each writer contributes a chapter. He has put his best thought into it. Every chapter glows with insight and burns with conviction. Van Dusen on "The Mood of Our Generation" lays bare the human reality with which religion must deal. "The incense of self-glorification," he says, "which modern men have been burning at their own altar is speedily evaporating. We begin to see ourselves truly at last. And the mirror returns to us a disquietingly stupid and weak and bewildered countenance. Ours is the paralysis of humilitating self-discovery." Bishop McConnell, writing about poverty under the heading, "The World Economic Crisis," puts Christianity into the economic struggle by this indisputable formula: "If the teaching of Jesus assigns so important a place to the giving of a crust of bread to a hungry man, Christianity must give itself more and more to the direct teaching that it is a Christian duty to increase the material responsiveness of the earth." Francis Miller, writing on "The New Religion of Nationalism," declares that the Christian answer to the totalitarian state "must be given in terms of membership in another organic society—the church—which conditions all other social loyalties." It isn't fair to make quotations from some and not from all these writers, but I have no space for more. Get this book, pastors. Get it on my say-so! I venture that if I promised to refund the price to any disappointed reader I would not lose a cent.

A Thought for the Month

HAS not the sense of awe departed from our generation? Has not our familiarity with nature's forces and with human nature, and with our own being, bred a sort of irreverence which borders on contempt? Has not our religion also lost its sense of awe? Our emphasis upon the fatherhood of God, upon his mercy and love—has it not lured us into sentimentalism? Has man lost the capacity to tremble before God? May not our contemporary atheism and humanism be a reflection of the dilettante attitude of religious people more than a reflection of profound or earnest thinking? Have not many Christians become too familiar with God? We treat him as if he were a sort of pal. We address him carelessly. Our prayers are slipshod. Often their very style and tone are an affront to the divine majesty. There is such a thing as being "too fresh" with God. And the emotions with which we approach him, are they not too soft, too sweet, too childish. We whine before him for comfort, or we flatter him in the hope of securing benefits. And many of the hymns with which we praise him are sentimental and silly. When we pray and when we worship we are thinking more of ourselves than of him. In our egoism we rest our whole case upon his mercy and kindness. We regard God as more of a grandfather than a father. The grandfather is indulgent, because he is not responsible for the child's upbringing. But the father who bears the responsibility mixes his gentleness with severity. In our commerce with God we must rest our case not alone on his kindness but on his severity. "Behold both the kindness and the severity of God," is the way Paul puts it. Perhaps the Barthians have gone too far when they describe God as "wholly other," but the emphasis is sound and wholesome. Our evangelical revivalism on one hand, and our over-optimistic liberalism on the other, have done much to cheapen God in the eyes of men. His wrath is no less real than his grace. The Lord our God is a *great* God!

The Kindness and the Severity of God

Charles Clayton Morrison

A World-Wide Fellowship of Preaching . . .

THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY PULPIT is continually being told by its readers of the increasing value of the Pulpit as a bond of fellowship—tying together, as it does, the thousands of ministers of all denominations, throughout America and in far-flung lands. From the larger cities, from towns and villages, from rural pastorates—from Japan, India, England, the Canal Zone—letters have come, testifying to the fact that, in these difficult days for ministers, the Pulpit has brought inspiration, encouragement, hope for the future.

HERE, for instance, is a letter from a Community church in Arizona. A lonely task, there, the work of a pastor. This minister writes:

> "I am greatly indebted to The Christian Century Pulpit and The Christian Century for help in thinking through the fog, smoke, and dust of our present atmosphere. In the isolation of this great Southwest, where personal contact with liberal, congenial, spiritual men is impracticable, the contacts you help to make with leaders of our time are to me invaluable."

BUT CITY PREACHERS, too, need encouragement and fellowship. A Baltimore preacher writes: "In a day when prophets are so greatly needed, and at a time when prophets themselves need the encouragement of comradeship and the consciousness that they are not alone, The Christian Century Pulpit is indeed rendering an unparalleled service."

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